

SAS Model District Initiative: topics and essential questions

Units	Essential Questions Addressed
Unit 1: The 3 SAS Principles and the SASMD Project	To what extent must schooling rest on principles understood and accepted by all local educators? What do formal explicit principles accomplish? What are the implications of the SASMD Principles?
Unit 2: Mission FALL 2011	What is a valid educational mission statement? Is ours valid? What does a valid and vital mission enable in terms of reform?
Unit 3: Commitments FALL 2011	How does an organization go from platitudes to living the mission(s)? What is best practice, how do people learn, and therefore to what practices and attitudes must we be committed as educators?
Unit 4: Assessment WINTER 2012	What is a mission-driven assessment system? How does it differ from conventional teacher assessments? What is rigor and how can we ensure it? How should state and national standards be locally assessed? How do we ensure quality control in local assessment? [DLGQ #3]
Unit 5: Action Planning WINTER 2012	What's the vision? What's the reality? What are the causes of the gap? What actions will yield the greatest gains? What do we need to do to close the gap?
Unit 6: Curriculum WINTER 2012	What is a mission-driven and standards-based curriculum? How does it differ from conventional frameworks and maps that are driven by topics and coverage? [DLGQ #1]
Unit 7: Instruction & Personalization SPRING 2012	What is mission-driven instruction? How does it differ from the norms of current teaching? What role do principles of learning and 'best practice' play in instruction? How are student needs and interests met? [DLGQ #2] [DLGQ #4]
Unit 8: Governance & Management SPRING 2012	How should schooling be organized to be mission-driven and results-focused? What new roles and responsibilities are required to achieve mission-driven governance? [DLGQ #5]
Unit 9: Personnel SPRING 2012	"What's my job, really?" How should personnel be hired, allocated, supervised, and evaluated in a mission-driven school? How should job descriptions be written to reflect the answers? [DLGQ #6] [DLGQ #7] [DLGQ #8]
Unit 10: Resources SPRING 2012	How should the key resources of time, technology, and budget be allocated in a mission-driven system? [DLGQ #9]
Unit 11: Culture SPRING 2012	What is a professional, open, and effective school culture in a mission-driven system? How can current norms be changed in the most positive and least heavy-handed or arbitrary ways? [DLGQ #10]

Note: DLGQ numbers refer to "District Level Guiding Questions" from the PADOE Strategic Planning Document "District Level Planning-Offline Guidance Tool. See Appendix A, below, for all the questions and related indicators. The dates refer to when the course modules will be finalized, not course completion due dates.